



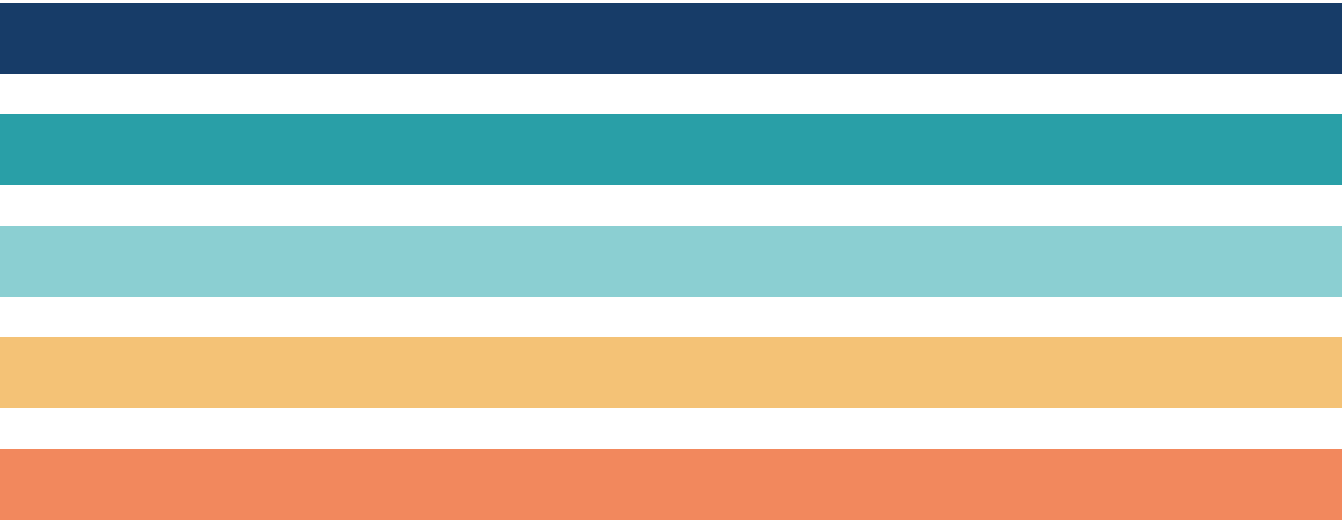
# JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT



## USER GUIDE

*Court Appointments Dashboard*

*August 31st, 2021*



# COURT APPOINTMENTS DASHBOARD GUIDE

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## I. COURT APPOINTMENT

On June 30, 2020, the Harris County Commissioners Court authorized JAD to develop a dashboard to enhance transparency and build public trust with Harris County court appointment practices. JAD launched the court appointments dashboard in October 2020 and, within a month of launching, felony public defender appointment rates increased significantly to 18 percent (up from an 8 percent average the month prior and more than twice the rate of any month so far this year).

The dashboard can be used to view both felony and misdemeanor court appointment rates (private attorney vs. public defender) for years 2017–2020 and can be accessed here: <https://jad.harriscountytexas.gov/Data/The-Court-Appointments-Dashboard>

## II. ABOUT THE COURT APPOINTMENTS DASHBOARD

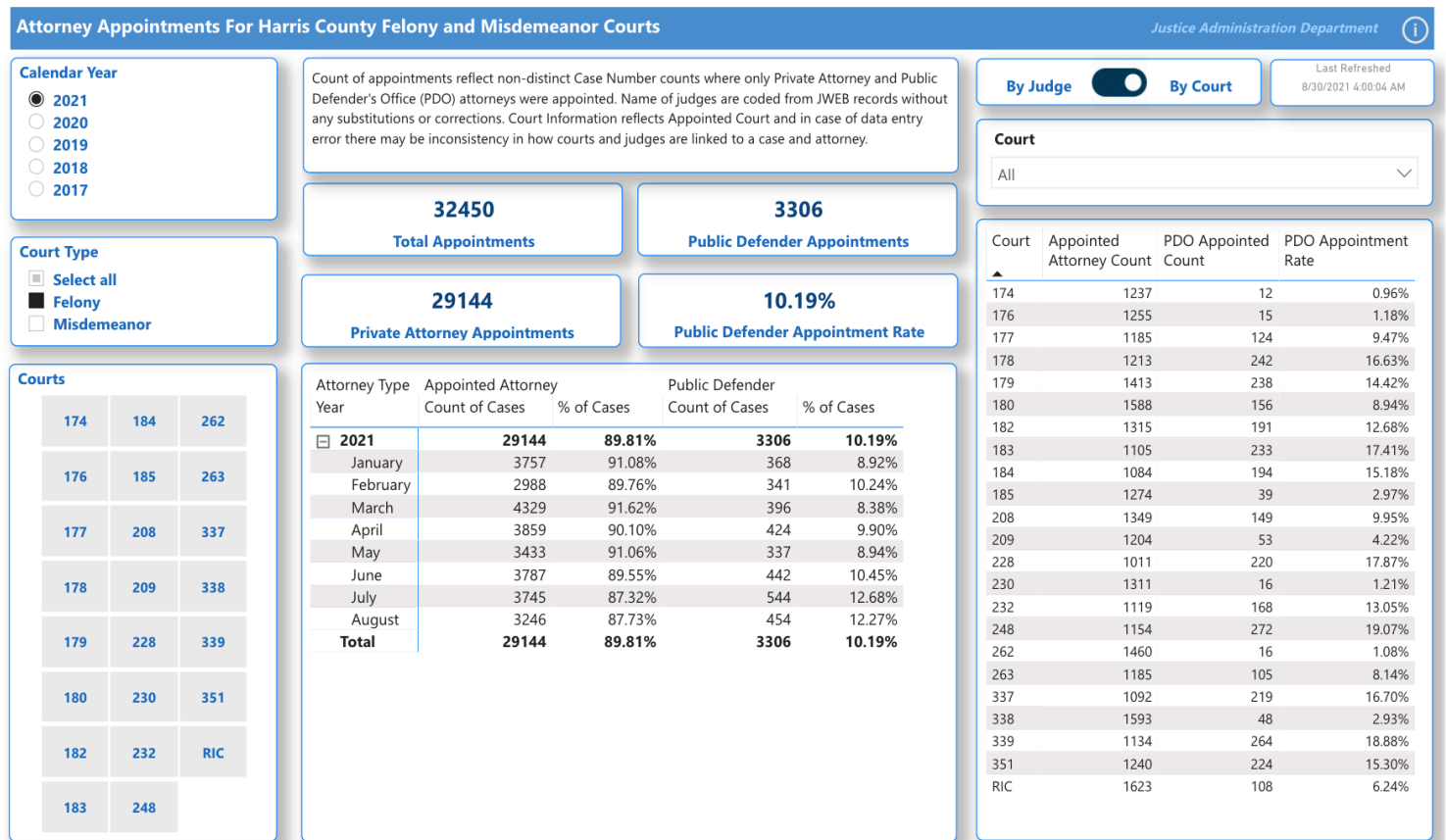
The Court Appointments Dashboard displays the total number of private defense attorney appointments by year versus the Public Defender's Office in the Felony and Misdemeanor Courts Division. The dashboard is broken out by the following: year and month, court division, individual court or by Judge, attorney appointment type, the total count of cases appointed, and the appointment rate for the public defender.

For Misdemeanor Courts, The Public Defender's Office is appointed to represent indigent defendants with a mental illness and/or intellectual disability within its daily or annual caseload capacity and defendants in appellate cases unless there is a conflict.

### III. DASHBOARD GUIDE

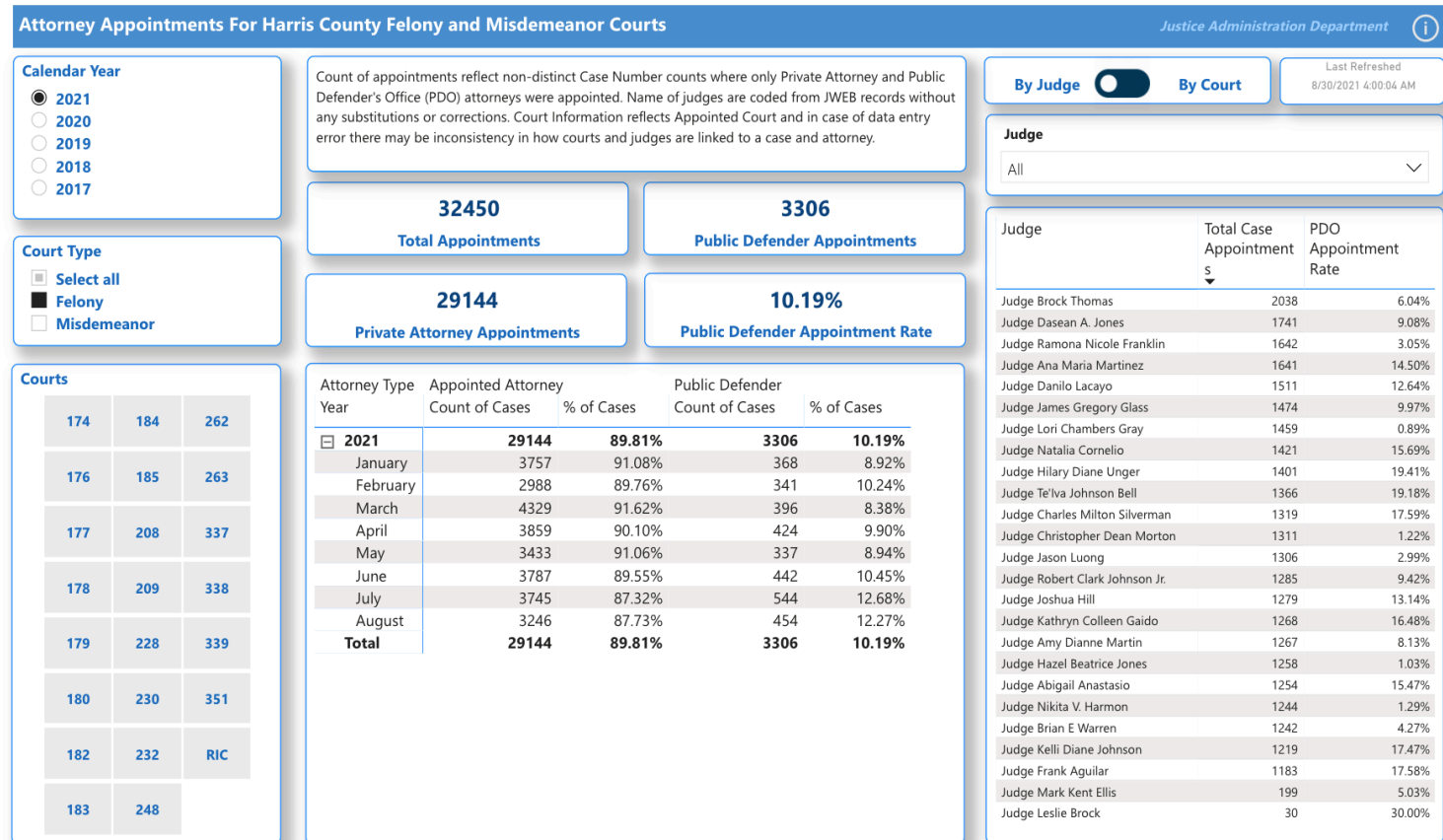
The Court Appointments dashboard contains two views into the data, By Court, and By Judge.

#### By Court:



- Filter options on the dashboard include "Year", "Court Type" and "Court"
  - Year: Filter data based on the date the private attorney or public defender was appointed
  - Court Type: Filter data based on the court of appointment
  - Court: Filter data based on the court number
- The page summarizes the total count of cases appointed by year and month, attorney appointment type, and the public defender appointment rate. Unclick the selected option to clear the filter.

## By Judge:



- Filter options on the dashboard include "Year", "Court Type" and "Court"
  - Year: Filter data based on the date the private attorney or public defender was appointed
  - Court Type: Filter data based on the court of appointment
  - Court: Filter data based on the court number
- The page summarizes the total count of cases appointed by year and month, attorney appointment type, and the public defender appointment rate. Unclick the selected option to clear the filter.
- Judges shown are not the complete list of appointed case counts; only the Judge's judges with a statistically significant count of appointed cases for the filters selected are shown.

## IV. METHODS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Information presented in this application is generated through a query against a case management application database commonly referred to as JWEB in Harris County, Texas. The query specifically counts private attorney ("AAT") and public defender ("DAT") appointments. The query looks explicitly at a table of attorney appointments that is commonly referred to as "yg" in the system. The counting algorithm considers two consecutive DAT appointments as one DAT appointments while counting consecutive AAT appointments as individual appointments. This idea reflects the concept that two DATs are essentially one entity. The date represented here reflects the date of attorney appointment. Since the data is refreshed regularly data entry changes and errors are expected. For example, there are instances where appointment date, attorney identifier, and Judge identifiers may be missing resulting in BLANK values.

## V. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

We hope you find this guide useful; for any questions pertaining to the dashboard, please contact [jad@jad.hctx.net](mailto:jad@jad.hctx.net). For interview requests, to receive more educational and informational materials from JAD, and or to receive our newsletter, please reach out to [media@jad.hctx.net](mailto:media@jad.hctx.net).